

NEWS RELEASE



OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

San Diego, California

***United States Attorney
Carol C. Lam***

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For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - May 10, 2004

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced that United States District Judge Jeffrey T. Miller today sentenced CHARLES TAPPE in federal district court in San Diego to 131 months in custody for possession of unregistered firearms and possession of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence.

On January 30, 2004, TAPPE pled guilty to one count of possession of unregistered firearms and one count of possession of a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence. The charges, which were part of an indictment returned on August 28, 2003, arose from Tappe's sale and transfer of 26 firearms, including machine guns, silencers, and pistols with obliterated serial numbers, all of which were later recovered by government agents. TAPPE was charged with co-defendant John D'Intino, who previously pled guilty and is currently awaiting sentencing.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michael G. Wheat, who is prosecuting the case, this case involves one of the largest recoveries of unlawful machine guns and silencers through an undercover operation in the history of the Southern District of California. TAPPE is a 57-year-old resident of Serra Vista, Arizona.

As part of his guilty plea, Tappe also admitted that between April 12, 2002 and July 1, 2002, he sold and transferred the firearms, through codefendant D'Intino, to an FBI undercover operative at locations inside and near Cheetah's, an adult entertainment club in Kearny Mesa. United States Attorney Lam said, "This prosecution eliminated a cache of dangerous illegal weapons, and removed an illegal arms dealer from our streets."

DEFENDANT:

CASE NUMBER: 03CR2433-JM

CHARLES TAPPE

SUMMARY OF CHARGES:

Count 3	Possession of Unregistered Firearm - Title 26, United States Code, Section 5861(d) Penalties: Maximum ten years in prison and a \$250,000 fine
Count 4	Possession of Firearm in Furtherance of Crime of Violence - Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1)(A)(i) Penalties: Maximum five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine

AGENCIES

Federal Bureau of Investigation
San Diego Police Department, Criminal Intelligence Unit